

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, GE, SU
SUBJECT: STOPH'S ONE-DAY VISIT TO MOSCOW.

REF: BERLIN 7016

1. NEUES DEUTSCHLAND (ND) REPORTED ON
DECEMBER 11, A "BRIEF VISIT" TO MOSCOW BY CHAIRMAN OF
THE GDR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS WILLI STOPH ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER
10. WHILE THERE, STOPH MET WITH HIS SOVIET COUNTERPART,
ALEXI KOSYGIN, AND FROM THE NEW REPORTS, THEIR DISCUSSION
CENTERED AROUND ECONOMIC THEMES, PARTICULARLY COOPERATION
IN THE FULFILLMENT OF ECONOMIC PLANS. EMPHASIS IN THIS
REGARD WAS GIVEN ACCORDING TO ND, TO SCIENTIFIC AND
TECHNICAL MATTERS. ND ALSO NOTES THE PROGRESS MADE
BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES UNDER THE 1975 SOVIET-GDR
TREATY IN THE SUCCESSFUL SOLUTION OF PROBLEMS CONNECTED
WITH THE BUILDING OF COMMUNIST AND SOCIALIST SOCIETIES.

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THE TALKS REPORTEDLY TOOK PLACE IN A "CORDIAL AND

COMRADELY" ATMOSPHERE.

2. COMMENT: THE DECEMBER 10 VISIT TO MOSCOW WAS STOPH'S FIRST OFFICIAL TRIP THERE SINCE HE ASSUMED THE PORTFOLIO OF COUNCIL OF MINISTER'S CHAIRMAN IN EARLY NOVEMBER. IT COMES JUST AFTER AN SED CENTRAL COMMITTEE PLENUM ON THE 1976-80 FIVE YEAR PLAN AND THE 1977 ANNUAL PLAN AND JUST BEFORE A FULL MEETING OF THE VOLKSKAMMER ON THE SAME SUBJECTS. WE VIEW THE STOPH VISIT AS A MANIFESTATION OF A REORIENTATION OF GDR ECONOMIC RELATIONS IN THE POST-SINDERMANN PERIOD TOWARD GREATER ENGAGEMENT WITH THE SOVIET UNION, AND A CONCOMITANT DOWNPLAYING OF ENGAGEMENT WITH THE WEST. WHATEVER OTHER SHORTCOMINGS MAY HAVE ARGUED FOR SINDERMANN'S REMOVAL, WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT HIS ENTHUSIASM FOR SUBORDINATING THE GDR ECONOMY TO THAT OF THE SOVIET UNION WAS LESS THAN TOTAL; AND THAT HIS REPLACEMENT BY OLD SOVIET HAND STOPH WAS MEANT IN PART TO REMEDY THAT DEFICIENCY. IN THIS CONTEXT, STOPH'S QUICK CONSULTATION WITH KOSYGIN ON THE EVE OF ADOPTION OF THE 1977 PLAN AND OF THE GDR-SOVIET TRADE PLAN FOR 1977, SIGNED IN BERLIN ON DECEMBER 14, SUGGEST A GDR DESIRE TO GET A SOVIET IMPRIMATUR ON THOSE DOCUMENTS, AND, WE THINK, TO BE OBSERVED TO BE DOING SO. POLANSKY

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